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by CD95L cDNA-transfected 'killer' dendritic

cells.

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Dendritic cells (DCs) are special subsets of antigen-presenting cells characterized by their highly potent capacity to activate immunologically naive T cells. Here we report that DCs that are transfected with CD95 ligand (CD95L) cDNA, called 'killer' DCs, deliver death signals, instead of activation signals, to T cells after antigen-specific interaction. Injection of antigen-pulsed killer DCs into mice before sensitization induced antigen-specific immunosuppression. When administered after sensitization, killer DCs suppressed immune responses almost completely after subsequent challenge. Thus, killer DCs represent an entirely new immunomodulatory protocol, which may become directly applicable in preventing and even treating T cell-mediated inflammatory diseases.